GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3126
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MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

:-

(a) whether the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab has pulled out of collaboration with India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the objectives behind entering into such a collaboration with MIT;

(d) the details of projects that were established in the country by this arrangement;

(e) the total expenditure incurred by the Government and other parties separately; and

(f) the details of the present status of these projects?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY(SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR)

(a): No, Sir.

(b): The collaboration between the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA and Media Lab Asiawas not continued beyond March 31, 2003.

(c): MIT, USA and MediaLab Asia entered into a Research and Collaboration Agreement (RCA) in September,2001 for the duration of the initial exploratory programme of Media Lab Asia. As per the RCA, the collaboration with MIT envisaged active and visible technical support to: (i) make available to the Company the technical knowledge, experience, skill, know-how and processes of MIT`s Media Lab to the extent relevant to the Media Lab Asia Program; and (ii) assist in the development of a technical plan for the Company`s research and educational programs.

(d): Media Lab has identified the following key research initiatives:

- Bits for all: to provide low cost, high bandwidth wireless connectivity.
- World Computer: to develop affordable computing and communication access devices.
- Tomorrow`s Tools: to develop sensors and interfaces for rural applications.

Research laboratories at five IITs, namely, Delhi, Mumbai, Kanpur,Chennai and Kharagpur have taken up several projects in these thrust areas. Pilot deployment has been carried out for some of the projects. Notable among these are: deployment of Multi hop wireless network to provide rural connectivity, development of innovative vehicle mounted access points to wireless network, Linux based geographical information system for handheld computers and research on low cost testing tools for deployment in the rural environment.

(e): Government of India has released Rs.65 crore as Grant-in- Aid to Media Lab Asia. There was no expenditure by other parties.

(f): The projects mentioned at (d) above are at different stages of implementation.